

# THE MONITOR



## Close call

Cowboys score late to avoid major upset, beat Texans 27-23.

Page 1B | [RGV Sports](#)

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## Home for history

Organizers call on San Benito to house museums in cultural heritage center.

Page 3A | [Valley & State](#)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022

SERVING THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY SINCE 1909

75 CENTS DAILY

# Holiday hardship



Delcia Lopez | [dlopez@themonitor.com](mailto:dlopez@themonitor.com)

Rosa Torres in her bedroom on Tuesday, Dec. 6, in Roma. Torres' uneven floors from the cracking foundation is making her home unstable and needs foundation repairs.

## Christmas loses magic for Roma family who lost father to COVID

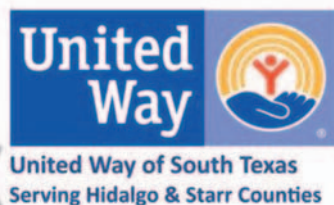
BY FRANCISCO E. JIMENEZ  
STAFF WRITER

ROMA — Jose Angel Torres and his family had been isolated from each other on the morning of February 1, 2021 due to COVID-19.

The entire family was sick, and Jose's wife, Rosa, wanted to keep her family separated to prevent further spread of the deadly virus.

Jose, a U.S. Army veteran, had been working with the Roma Independent School District as a bus driver when the pandemic began. After a few months, he'd been called back to work.

"He was in dialysis for eight years," Rosa said. "Ever since COVID, since he had to go back to work, he got sick there at school."



According to Rosa, a co-worker had tested positive for the virus, so Jose was sent home as a precaution.

"They just sent him home so he could take a COVID test," Rosa recalled. "It was a Wednesday. He did the COVID test on Friday and the results came back Sunday. So we all went to go check also

on Sunday, and Monday we all came back positive also."

About a week later — on Feb. 1, his oldest daughter's birthday — Jose came out of his room and alerted his wife to call an ambulance.

"We were all in different rooms. He just came out of the room and he said, 'Go call the ambulance,'" Rosa

said. "I'm like, 'Why? What happened?' He's like, 'I don't feel good.' So he came with his shoes in his hands and he just sat down. I told the kids, 'Let's go outside,' because I thought it was the diabetes, blood pressure — he had everything.

"So I'm like, 'Maybe it's something like (diabetes).' So I gave him orange juice because maybe it was the sugar," she continued. "He checked his blood pressure and the oxygen, and it was really low. He was like, 'It's my oxygen. I can't breathe. I feel like I can't breathe.' I'm like, 'Why?' And he's like, 'I don't know. I can't breathe.'"

Rosa ushered her three children outside as her

See **COVID VICTIMS** | 5A

## UTRGV set to name Bush first head coach

BY BRYAN RAMOS  
STAFF WRITER

UTRGV has found its guy to build the foundation for Division I football in the Rio Grande Valley.

Travis Bush, a Gregory-Portland graduate who played college football at Texas State and has several coaching stops at the Division I and high school levels, is set to be named UTRGV's first football coach in program history, sources confirmed to The Monitor and [RGV Sports.com](#).



Bush

Dave Campbell's Texas Football was first to report on Bush to be named UTRGV head coach.

Bush has years of coaching experience at the college level and most recently served as athletic coordinator and football head coach at New Braunfels Canyon, where he's spent the past two years. He led New Braunfels

See **BUSH** | 8A

## National debt may create standoff in '23

BLOOMBERG NEWS

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden is headed toward a standoff over the national debt next year, when Republicans newly in control of the U.S. House threaten to demand concessions for raising the government's legal borrowing limit.

Democratic leaders in Congress say they've run out of time to force through an increased debt ceiling this year, with most Republicans opposed. Two senators — Democrat Joe Manchin of West Virginia and newly independent Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona — insist that any vote should be bipartisan.

That will push the fight off until 2023, when Republicans will assume the majority in the

## COVID VICTIMS

From Page 1A

husband sat on the sofa struggling to breathe and waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

“For us, it’s like the ambulance takes forever,” Rosa said. “Maybe they took like three or four minutes to get here, but for us it’s like they never get here.”

Rosa had just sat down when she heard a loud noise coming from inside the house. She ran back inside with her eldest daughter and found Jose collapsed on the floor.

“I didn’t let them come in, just my oldest daughter — she came in,” Rosa said. “I could hear the ambulance so I went running outside. She was just yelling and yelling, ‘Daddy, don’t leave us.’”

The ambulance showed up within minutes and began working on Jose. When it came time to go to the hospital, all Rosa and her three children could do was watch as Jose was taken away — unable to follow due to their positive COVID-19 status.

It would be hours before Rosa was able to hear any news about her husband. She got a call from her brother, who was an emergency contact for her husband. He’d been called to the hospital to fill out some paperwork. It was then that he learned his brother-in-law’s fate, and he would have to relay the news to his sister.

“He came back around 6 or 6:30, and he just told me. He knocked on the door and I had to go outside. I didn’t want anybody inside because of COVID. So I went outside, and he’s like, ‘He didn’t make it.’”

To make matters worse, Rosa and her family were not able to attend Jose’s funeral due to COVID-19.



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Rosa Torres and her daughter Mida Huerta, 22, carry their pet “Patty” outside their home on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Since then, her family has struggled to recover from the shocking and immense loss.

Since that fateful day, Rosa and her family have struggled to move on with their lives. Her children have seen counselors to try to help them cope with the loss of their father, but his absence is still strongly felt.

“My youngest daughter’s just like, ‘I want to be with daddy. I want to go with daddy.’ She’s like, ‘I miss daddy.’ We miss him too, but we just have to keep on going,” Rosa said.

Despite her best efforts to help her children and bring back some joy into their lives, every birthday and holiday serves as a reminder that Jose is gone.

“It’s not the same. For Thanksgiving, my husband would do everything. He would do the turkey, everything. Now it’s like, they don’t want to,” Rosa said. “They’re like, ‘Why do we celebrate? Dad’s not here.’ Last year, I didn’t put a tree because they didn’t want to. They were like, ‘Why?’ This year, one of my friends came over. She went and got everything. She was like, ‘I’m going to set you up a Christmas tree.’ The kids were like, ‘Only if we put his stocking.’ So I was like, ‘OK,

let’s do it.’ I know it’s hard for them. They don’t want nothing for Christmas.”

A row of stockings now line a wall next to the Torres family’s Christmas tree. Standing out from the red and green colored stockings is a blue and white Dallas Cowboys themed stocking. Jose’s stocking.

Their 12-year-old son, Jose Angel Torres II, or Deuce to his father, shares his father’s love for his Dallas Cowboys. He wore a blue and white Jason Witten jersey as he remembered his father.

When asked what Christmas means to him, he said, “It’s nothing really.” He said that he doesn’t get excited for Christmas like he used to.

But the family has needs. Their foundation, for instance, is cracking and their floors are now uneven, making their Roma house unstable and in need of repairs.

To help, call the United Way of South Texas at (956) 686-6331 and inquire about this family and the Spirit of Christmas campaign. The Monitor has partnered with the United Way of South Texas to garner support for Rio Grande Valley families in need of monetary donations, or other items and gifts specified in this story.